

MEMORANDUM

State of Alaska

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

TO: [

Roger D. Wadman
Region I Supervisor
Sport Fish Division

DATE : March 23, 1973

FROM: Mike McHugh
Fishery Biologist
Sport Fish Division

SUBJECT: Marriot's Memo of
1/12/73

Referring to the subject memo which became available to the regional office on March 22, I have the following comments:

Pt. Adolphus Lakes - Distance from population centers has given this system a low Sport Fish priority and no work has ever been done on them by Sport Fish, although Comm Fish has attempted some surveys using a single hand-held line in conjunction with their routine summer stream survey flights. In my wilder moments of lake management fantasy I have catalogued this system as the one with the best population of gommarrids which has aircraft access so that it could be used as a donor source - which can't be any more ridiculous than walking on the moon.

Anyhow, I feel that coho is probably the least objectionable species for an introduction as proposed because after a couple years they should have all migrated out leaving a barren lake again. Fishery-wise I'd have thought that sockeye would be more logical?

Mile 25 Lake - There is no sport fish data on this lake. Sounds like a helicopter plant? For 30,000 fry with a potential return of? If the outlet needs dredging for nomad entry, then it would need dredging for smolt migration? I can't see any objection from the Sport Fish viewpoint.

Neck Lake Inlet Pond - Being in the Ketchikan area I have no official interest, which matches my knowledge of the area. It is tempting to endorse any Comm Fish planting of grayling, but it leads me to question just how the pie is being sliced?

Turner Lake - This lake is relatively close to town and has a good potential for expansion of recreational facilities if Smokey ever becomes affluent. In addition it has an excellent kokanee population which contributes to excellent CT and DV size and abundance. I suspect that the key to existing fish abundance is the kokanee and assume that introduced sockeye would compete with kokanee causing some decrease; however, I further suspect that a CT or DV has as much trouble as I do in differentiating between sockeye and kokanee fry or fingerlings and that it wouldn't make much difference to the predator.

Kokanee sampled in August of 1970 had stomach contents about equally divided between plankton, surface insects and aquatic insect larvae. The last two categories are also used by CT and DV, so any increase in competition might cause a hardship on CT and DV in their earlier non-predatory years?

Superficially, it seems that introduction of anadromous fish would cause little difficulty other than food competition. However, coho would undoubtedly enter the system, and they are excellent competitors, usually being the dominant species in minnow trap sets in anadromous waters. With this additional species present it is not entirely conjectural that present species would suffer in the limited rearing streams feeding Turner Lake.

Anadromous cutthroat and DV stocks are not to be scorned, but they do have the fault of being rather shifty in their timing and availability. September fish are of little value in a July fishery; in Turner they are present for the entire season. With access, I would expect the Turner populations would end up spending the hot summer in the cool saltwater or running around a bunch of little-fished streams and any large ones would find grief in the gillnets in front of the outlet.

If the evaluation of the kokanee transplant at Thayer Lake is favorable, then we will be seeking kokanee donor stocks in the future. Turner Lake is the handiest source of kokanee, and the fish are larger than most other kokanee populations in the area and could be fished late in the season. Thus both biologically and logistically there are some advantages to maintaining the present stock for a transplant source.

In summary, I feel that it would not be in the best interest of the sport fishery to provide access to Turner Lake. Also it would lead to some problems in the commercial fishery if a local closure was attempted to allow building of the run for a couple cycles, especially if they want to jump around in saltwater for a month or two before going up to the lake?

cc:Marriot